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Switzerland Near Espionage Center—

# Mideast Plots 'Born In Bern'

**Editor's Note:** The following dispatch by Frank H. Bartholomew, president of United Press International, is based on a thorough investigation of Communist espionage activities in Switzerland. On a recent trip to Europe, Bartholomew spent days in Bern, Zurich and Geneva, talking with American diplomats and members of U.S. counter-espionage services. Some of the statements made in the dispatch were contributed to Bartholomew in writing by his news sources, but because of the secret nature of their work these persons must remain anonymous.

**By FRANK H. BARTHOLOMEW**  
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The Iraqi revolt was "born in Bern," Western counter-espionage agents indicated today.

A sudden increase in the movement of Communist agents from Moscow via Prague, Zurich and on to Bern, and military and political representatives of the United Arab Republic was observed and in some instances secretly recorded on motion pictures made at airports, this correspondent was told.

Bern because of the neutral position of Switzerland which is free from all bloc other countries, or Western has been a regular meeting place for Arabian rebels and their Communist supporters.

Here the Lebanon crisis was fanned and many of the political action and propaganda plots which are tossed to the surface in the satellite states, India, Red China and the Middle East, have a label for these "Born in Bern." It is now attached to the Iraqi revolt.

Switzerland has played a



**AT SPY CENTER—U.S. Ambassador Taylor.**

...of investigation... experience as a... journalist and... expert says that... the basic reasons... powers regard... and with its 70 foreign... from the worlds of Com... munism and democracy as "the... listening post for Europe... and the Middle East."

Zurich, Switzerland's largest



**KNOWS BERN—Allen Dulles,** head of the U.S. CIA who operated from the Switzerland capital as an espionage leader during the last war.

city, and Geneva, seat of many international conferences, have become with Bern the physical contact points or Red agents operating in the Middle East, France, Western Germany, Britain, Spain, Portugal and Italy.

"Their target is the free world, and they load up their ammunition in Zurich, Geneva and Bern," Taylor said.

Here the agents come to make reports and to receive orders for future activities and faked credentials for implementing them.

Transfer of currencies from the issue of one nation to that of another is facilitated, since Switzerland has recognized not only the Western powers and Russia but also the latter's satellites including Red China and Bulgaria. The United States recognizes neither of the latter. Both are heavily represented in Bern.

A second reason the transfer of spy activities was advantageous to the Reds is because of Switzerland's central location as the hub of a complex of modern rail and airlines fanning out in all directions.

Zurich's Kloten Airport has one of the heaviest year-round traffic loads in all Europe, with direct daily schedules to Moscow via change of airlines in Prague.

The secondary route for Soviet exchange, equally fast and regular, is via the Vienna gateway. No Russian airline or aircraft is permitted to fly into Switzerland.

self, where national feeling appears to be solidly anti-Communist.

Switzerland is the apex of the triangle and equally accessible from all parts of the Arab world, which itself spreads over a distance equal to that from Hawaii to Bermuda. Many Arab capitals are closer to Bern than to each other.

"The Communists have operated with a careful eye to the strict Swiss laws against espionage," this reporter was told in Zurich, "even while they secretly abuse the fundamental laws protecting freedom of the individual."

"The gathering place for agents and principals, and the 'cashier's office' for payments is rotated among the various satellite embassies and missions in Bern."

"Important gatherings of Communist agents seldom are held in the large embassy of the U.S.S.R. itself. The Kremlin doesn't want to take a chance on an upset or arrest that will directly reflect on the U.S.S.R."

**Big And Costly**

"They plant their agents in their international conference delegations under all kinds of covers, palm them off as chauffeurs of the Red ambassador's cars in Bern, which gives them a good run of the country and in other ways rotates their contacts constantly."

This correspondent recalled that in the first atomic bomb testing at Bikini, which was opened to selected professional newspapermen from all nations of the world, the Russian "journalist" by his own admission turned out to be the commanding officer of the Bureau of Docks and Yards for the Red navy.

The Communist intelligence web centering in Bern is an enormous and expensive operation and calls for large-scale measures in counter-espionage by all the Western powers, Ambassador Taylor said.

None of this intensifying activity between the world's major opposing forces is visible to the nation's thousands of seasonal tourists. Yet the cold war is very hot here indeed and much which breaks from the four corners of the world has its real start in Bern.

Trim young Swiss soldiers everywhere—Switzerland's ready army of 604,000—is the largest in Western Europe—create a feeling that the nation's tranquillity and neutrality are not to be lightly challenged. None of the activity of spying and counterspying is allowed to touch Switzerland itself.

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